

Ainlen

Pan Am, for \$1 a Year, Flies U.S. Vietnam Troops on Leave

By TANIA LONG

Pan American World Airways has set a fare of one-thirtieth of a cent for a five-day round-trip flight from Vietnam to Taiwan, the Crown Colony of Hong Kong or Tokyo.

This unusual fare—unquestionably the lowest in the world—is made possible under a contract between the airline and the United States Government to airlift 3,000 battle-weary soldiers, airmen and marines a month for \$1. The airline provides six aircraft and crews on what has become known as the "rest and recreation airlift."

So far, about 10,000 servicemen have been flown on Pan American DC-6's to distant vacation spots, and the airline expects to carry about 23,000 by the end of June.

Servicemen are eligible after three months' duty in Vietnam. But, according to Capt. James P. Perry of Idle Falls, Ohio, who is attached to the 12th Aviation Station near Saigon, there is already a tremendous backlog of applicants.

"We can only send one or two men from each company," he said recently. The present rate of furloughs for the 250,000 American servicemen in Vietnam will take five years to liquidate, the captain added.

The planes call daily at three

bases in Vietnam for their cargo of servicemen and are manned by senior Pan American personnel, all of whom have volunteered to operate this special service.

As more Boeing 727 jets become available to the airline, they will replace the DC-6's, a company spokesman said. He explained that the contract with the Government has been signed to as the carrier's contribution to the war effort in Vietnam.

The servicemen selected for furloughs, on the basis of length of combat duty, are transported by helicopter or plane from their forward position to the "R-and-R airlift" bases at Saigon, Camranh Bay and Danang. There, they embark on the DC-6's, which carry 83 passengers and crew.

Pan American also operates 23 flights a week from the United States to Vietnam, carrying military materiel and personnel. This is twice as many military flights as a year ago. By July 1, Pan American expects to increase its flights to Vietnam to 38 a week. As a result, the airline has been unable to increase the number of flights to Europe this summer by as many as it had anticipated.